



Creating Connections for Youth Ages 12 - 18

The Permanency Partners Program (P3) is a partnership of Consortium for Children, a private non-profit California Corporation and the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services.

P3 is a program designed to create permanency options (through the use of mediation) for dependent Youth ages 12 through 18 who currently have a plan of long term foster care. The goal of the program is to

create a partnership with a Youth to identify individuals who, are currently, or who have been in the past, significant in the Youth's life. Ultimately, if successful, the Youth will exit foster care.

Through a specialized mediation process the Youth and the identified party will work to reach an agreement of how their relationship will be defined: through adoption, guardianship, or a mentoring relationship. P3 will also explore the possibility of a Youth returning home to their family of origin. If all parties agree P3 will work to develop a written agreement to help define the services that will be required, how the family will keep the Youth safe and what legal resolution will be utilized (dismissed dependency, kin adoption, guardianship, etc.). Many of these Youth have foster parents who are willing to adopt them but the Youth is resistant to the idea of adoption. Through mediation, we are hopeful these Youth will examine the benefits of being adopted. If a significant person is unable to be identified, and the Youth agrees they would like to be adopted, permanent families will be recruited for the Youth.

P3 will use Consortium for Children's successful Permanency Planning Mediation Model to identify permanency solutions for Youth in danger of aging out of foster care. The program will devote approximately 30 hours per Youth per mediation. The program is field based and begins by using a caucus model of mediation (one on one) and moves toward group mediation.

Initially P3 will pilot the program in Service Bureau 4 and target 50 Youth deemed appropriate for the project by The Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services. The pilot of 50 Youth will be paid for from Consortium for Children's contract with the California Department of Social Services and be free to Los Angeles County. Mediators will review each Youth's file looking for significant people, family members, school counselors, coaches, etc. Once a file has been reviewed the mediator will meet with the Youth to identify their wants and needs as well as to talk about their desires.

If necessary, Consortium for Children staff will locate individuals lost to the Youth. The organization currently has two private investigators on staff willing to donate their time to this project. Once an individual has been identified and located, the mediator will work with the Youth and the individual (or family) to bring about a permanent plan for the Youth. A detailed written plan will be developed by the parties and, once approved by the Department, be implemented.

It is estimated mediation will take approximately three (6) months to complete. Consortium for Children Mediators all have Master's Degrees in Social Work or a related field, 5 years experience providing direct services to children and families in the public child welfare system and have completed 60 hours of specialized training. Mediators used for this project will all have over 50 hours of experience providing Mediation to Stakeholders in the child welfare system. Mediators chosen for P3 will undergo an additional 8 hours of specialized training.

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